PRACTICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Volume 2

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EDITORIAL REMARKS

On the Use of Anthropological Materials by Christians

Most evangelical theologians, scholars and writers have shown little appreciation of the anthropological point of view and much less disposition to deal with or utilize anthropological materials. This is in spite of the fact that anthropology, as the science of man, has as much importance for Christian thought and behavior as any academic discipline, and perhaps more. All but a few Christian scholars seem unaware that this is so. Still others are antagonistic toward anthropology, in part, possibly, because most of the troubling aspects of the conflict between science and Christianity center in anthropology. It also may reflect to some degree the antagonism that Christians in general seem to have toward science.

On the other hand, when some scientific fact or theory appears to confirm a Christian position Christian scholars are not loathe to utilize the prestige of science by proclaiming that science actually shows a Christian view to be correct. Likewise, Christian scholars who ordinarily may show little interest in anthropology are pleased to accept and use anthropological information with some enthusiasm when it seems to support a view held by Christians.

I do not think that it is wrong for us as Christians to cite scientific fact and opinion in support of our views. There are serious dangers in it, however, which some have fallen into, and which should be corrected. To glorify God we must be as careful in the use of scientific material which agrees with our position as we are with that which seems to conflict with it. This requirement has not been met always.

Perhaps the most significant instance of this is the use in some seminaries and other places of the "high God" concept of the great Catholic anthropologist, Father Wilhelm Schmidt. Father Schmidt, in his monumental work on the origin of religion, maintains that the existence of a

belief in a Supreme Being among some of the most "primitive" peoples is proof that the earliest form of religion was monotheism. That one of the world's leading anthropologists, greatly respected by other anthropologists all over the world, has claimed to have found scientific evidence in support of the belief of Christians in an original monotheism has seemed to some Christian scholars sufficient justification for utilizing the theory without subjecting it to adequate checking. In their anxiety to accept scientific support they have failed to discover that Father Schmidt's interpretations of the evidence are based on premises which anthropology as a whole has had to reject. I think careful checking would cause most intellectually honest Christian scholars to agree with the majority of anthropologists that Father Schmidt's approach does not scientifically demonstrate an original monotheism. Bible believing Christians will agree with Schmidt's conclusion, but not because of the evidence and methodology which he has used. In this case, as in some others, Christians have accepted the material, not on its own merits, but because it lends scientific support to their own position.

The weaknesses of Schmidt's theories are nicely stated by William A. Smalley in the anthropology section in the second edition of Modern Science and Christian Faith, written by members of The American Scientific Affiliation. Among other things he points out that the fact that a group now has a belief in a Supreme Being does not indicate that it has always entertained that belief (p. 130).

Other examples of this sort which have come to my attention are statements to the effect that certain morphologically modern types of fossil men are older than heavy-boned types such as Java man, Heidelberg man, etc., and that an anthropologist at the University of Chicago has demonstrated that man is not over 50,000 years old. Though these exhibit aspects somewhat different from the use of the "high God" concept, all three examples illustrate the tendency of Christians to make rather uncritical use of scientific material which seems to agree with their own views.

There are at least two major lessons to be drawn from situations like these. One, already stated, is that Christian scholars must evaluate all scientific material carefully and objectively, even if it does happen to support their theories. The other lesson is that we need more professional Christian anthropologists, who can properly evaluate anthropological materials and make this information available to Christians in other fields. This also means that non-anthropological Christian scholars should be willing to consult Christian anthropologists. They also could encourage young Christians to enter the field of anthropology for Christian anthropologists are rare.

These are some ways in which we as Christians can avoid propogation of errors which may hinder our efforts to make Christ and His salvation known to an unbelieving world.

Subscription Policy Change

Contrary to last year's policy we are now accepting subscriptions to begin with the next issue after the subscription order has been received, unless the subscriber specifies with which issue he wishes his subscription to begin. All back copies are still available, and we can begin a subscription with any issue desired. Most of those who subscribed before November of 1954 were sent all back copies of Volume 1, and their subscriptions expired with the Nov-Dec, 1954 issue. Numbers beside the address on copies of Practical Anthropology will indicate the month and year when the subscription expires. Our records show that all subscribers to Volume 1 (1953-54) have received all 8 numbers. If any have failed to receive them we will appreciate it if you will let us know. We will be glad to supply you with duplicate copies.

This Issue's Contributors

Dale Kietzman, the author of this issue's article, is a missionary with the Wycliffe Bible Translators. At present he is in charge of the Chicago office of his organization. He has spent several years as a missionary in South America

and holds a master's degree in anthropology from Northwestern University.

Claude Stipe, author of the review, is a graduate student in anthropology at UCLA. He is a graduate of Wheaton College.

Next Issue

Present plans for the March-April issue include an article by Dr. Eugene Nida discussing some of the problems and means of communicating the gospel to people of alien language and culture, and review of Dr. Nida's significant new book, Customs and Cultures, by Mrs. Milton Gabler of Wycliffe Bible Translators. We also expect to include an editorial discussing the need for Christian professional anthropologists and appraising some of the possibilities in this field. We think you will find it a challenging issue.

FOLKLORE: A TOOL FOR THE MISSIONARY

Dale W. Kietzman

The study of folklore provides for the missionary one of the most promising means of entrance into the study of an indigenous culture. While folklore has received a great deal of attention within the stream of our own culture the study of aboriginal tales has been less emphasized and therefore has been overlooked as a possibility by the missionary student. This is probably due to the apparently false and depraved content of many of the folktales that have been recorded. Yet these very tales, false though they may be, can have tremendous value in shaping the presentation of Gospel truth.

While the term "folklore" has many usages the definition "unwritten literature" will suit well our present purposes. While it is impossible to detail the innumerable varieties of tales and sayings that might be discovered this simple definition would include any verbal tradition, song or saying that has sufficient permanence of form to permit of its being recorded by normal linguistic procedure.

A discussion of folklore would necessarily relate itself to a discussion of the form, content, and cultural context of the particular item of folk literature. Each of these aspects has an important contribution to make for the missionary who earnestly desires to have the message he presents accepted by the people he would reach.

A discussion of the literary form and linguistic style of folklore is beyond the scope of the present paper. It would include the wide range of myths, legends, folktales, proverbs, riddles, song texts, incantations and praise names in their varied style as they may be found in various cultures. The analysis of these types, with the linguistic forms peculiar to each, provides the solution to the problem of a graceful and forceful translation or gospel message. Such a concern for the artistic traditions of a people will certainly provide a more ready acceptance of the speaker into the circle of attention of the people.

Most folklorists, for the sake of convenience in analysis, divide the body of folk literature into prose narrative types. For aboriginal peoples it has been found useful to distinguish only three prose narrative types, and this further division is not based on a consideration of the literary form or style as such but upon content and the reaction of the people to the tale. Thus myth, legend and folktale are distinguished on the basis of whether they represent world conditions as they now are or a previous mythological age and whether they are accepted by the people as being truth or fiction. The definition of each type is most easily presented in the following chart form:[1]

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Regarded as fact</td><td>MYTH</td><td>Pertains to a time and conditions essentially different from our own</td></tr>
<tr><td>LEGEND</td><td rowspan="2">Pertain to a time and conditions essentially the same as our own</td></tr>
<tr><td>Regarded as fiction</td><td>FOLKTALE</td></tr>
</table>

While it is true that literary style was not the criterion for the above division it has been found that the types distinguished above, in a given culture, may have distinctive literary or linguistic characteristics. We must suppose that the people for whom the tale is told will find in the telling the clue that will indicate whether to accept the tale as fact regardless of how fantastic it may appear to us, or to recognize it as fiction, even though it may represent a very realistic account of a probable happening. If this clue is linguistic it would be of supreme importance for the missionary to discover it before attempting to present his own "story."

Although we have been content with presenting only a three-fold division of prose narrative types it should be emphasized that in a given culture many distinguishable tale types may be current. The characteristic of each which must be ascertained by the missionary is its acceptance by the people.

> Some of it is essentially mythology, some less pretentious origin legend, some local history, some an embodiment of supernatural belief; and some assumes such definitive narrative form that it differs little from the complex folktale...As fantastic as some of this material is, it is related as an object of belief and its effect, in contrast with that of the ordinary folktale, is the effect of history, rather than of fiction.[2]

Granting the possibility of such an analysis for most aboriginal literature, it will readily be seen that a detailed linguistic analysis of each type of prose narrative is vital to a missionary's preparation for work in any language group where the usual preaching methods are not already established among the people. To present the life of Christ in a form or with a vocabulary associated by the people with tales that are known to be untrue would simply negate the missionary's purpose.

Non-prose narrative types may occupy a very important position in native thought. One of the most widespread and valuable for use by an evangelist is the proverb. With its wisdom appreciated and accepted by his listeners the apt use of a proverb or maxim could well mean the difference between acceptance or rejection of the message. The inherent value of proverbs has been summarized thus:

> From whatever source they may ultimately come, proverbs eventually attain the status of unimpeachable wisdom. They are thought to embody the best results of the experience of a race, and a large proportion of mankind is governed by them in the activities of daily life.

Their exact formulation assumes an importance almost as great as the essential wisdom contained.[3]

The matter of style presents an interesting linguistic problem of which the investigator should be aware. Literary style is the use of words for aesthetic effect. It is playing with the structure that the language provides. Stylistic devices may be linguistic forms found in normal speech but used with a different frequency, or they may be forms that depart sharply from normal usage. It is important to note and analyze these, not just for the linguistic interest they may provide but in order that they may be used in their proper place. This requires a correlation of linguistic style and literary form that could be extremely important in gaining acceptance for the content of a message.

In addition to the very general information contained in the dichotomy that has been made as to the content of folklore (into those tales that pertain to this present world condition, and those that pertain to some previous mythological period) it is possible to find a great deal of actual history recorded in oral tradition. Obviously the events may not be accurately reported, and no dates will be attached, but a close examination may yield information that will prove of value to the missionary. This has, in fact, been the case repeatedly in Latin America, where, through the content of folklore, the contact with early missionary priests has been recorded and something of Christianity is evidenced in the oral tradition. But during the past three centuries this early teaching has not been added to, or at least no additional contact or information has made an impression upon the indigenous people.[4]

As valuable as the specific content of a tale may be the generalized content of folk literature may be of even greater value in terms of leads provided for investigation into the culture of a people. It can be assumed that the content of the tales are of interest to the ones who repeatedly tell them, or who listen to their recital. This, then, is a tangible source of information as to their way

of thinking. There is a relationship between folklore and the life and thought of the people who have formed it. It can give us information that permits us to see their motives and interests, desires and frustrations in the humdrum of daily life. Such information may quickly point to the focal aspect of the culture with a consequently more understandable assessment of the total culture far earlier than might otherwise be possible. Facts presented in the folktales and proverbs could lead to an understanding of status and role, motivations and reactions that would be difficult or impossible to solicit by direct interrogation.

It is a well-known principle that the adequate comprehension of a problem helps much toward its solution. Missionaries in particular are faced with the problem of introducing new ways of thought that run counter to aboriginal dogma. If this dogma is largely contained in the folklore then that is the logical area to study in order to discover what can best be modified or supplanted without causing a great deal of turmoil within the culture.

The matter of cultural context has already been touched upon by the reference to acceptance of tales as true or false by the people. Equally as important as this is the discovery of the purpose for telling a particular tale. Admittedly much of storytelling is for entertainment. But folklore may have a great many social functions beyond the aesthetic or entertainment value. It may be used to explain ritual, belief or physical phenomena. It may be used to teach children the sanctions of behavior or to enhance the prestige of those who follow right norms. It may, in fact, be the device by which the continuity of the moral code is assured.

For the detailed study of folklore with the purpose of deciding upon its social function Villa Rojas suggests that the following three questions would have to be asked about each item or salient fact in a body of folk literature:[5]

1. What does this particular item mean to these particular people?

2. What social factors contribute to sustaining this particular belief or practice?

3. What social necessity is satisfied by this belief or practice within the total culture of the group?

Beside this general social context there is the analysis of the physical situation in which the story is told and the participants in the event. There would seem to be a good possibility that the preacher and his message would be placed, in the aboriginal scheme of things, with the storyteller and the tale he recites. The position of the storyteller in the society then becomes one well worth examining. The details of the telling, when and where appropriate, to whom told and the expected reaction will all help in an intelligent assessment of the most appropriate method for the proclamation of the Gospel.

There is remarkably little written about the best methods of recording and analyzing folklore. One emphasis is repeatedly made, however, and that is that the tale should be recorded accurately in the native language. This would require on the part of the investigator a good knowledge of linguistic field procedure, for the value of the collected material is tremendously reduced if it is recorded inaccurately or only in translation through a bilingual informant conversant with one of the world languages.[6]

A great adjunct to the collection of tales is a tape recorder. This permits the informant to speak at his normal speed with a definite encouragement not to edit the story down to a size convenient for dictation. By this method it is also possible to collect the tales while the people are talking at leisure among themselves. It should be emphasized, however, that the tape-recorded tale must, at the earliest possible moment, be transcribed with the aid of an informant who can, with the prompting of the recorder, repeat accurately and at a slower pace the tale previously recited by the raconteur.

With each tale as much as possible of the following information should be recorded as an aid to further analysis: the provenience of the tale: the name, age, occupation and length of residence of the narrator, and his role in the society; the form of the tale in relation to the total body of tribal literature; the function of this story in the culture; the physical setting of the recital; audience reaction and participation; and the linguistic style peculiar to this particular item. Obviously some of this information will be obtainable only after analysis and a great deal of experience with the people, but that which can be recorded immediately should be put down right along with the tale.

For any who may be interested in pursuing further a study of folklore, the following brief bibliographical suggestions may be helpful:

A summary of the growth and present status of folkloristic studies is to be found in E. J. Lindgren, "The Collection and Analysis of Folk-Lore" (in F. C. Bartlett, et al, The Study of Society, 1939, pp. 328-374). Somewhat along the same line, but also discussing in detail the problems presently being dealt with in the field is M. J. Herskovits, "Folklore after a Hundred Years: A Problem of Redefinition" (Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 59, 1946, pp. 89-100).

Stith Thompson, The Folktale (1946) is probably the most widely used textbook. While this discussion confines itself to the prose narrative form, and is written primarily with the analysis of Indo-European mythology in mind, it still contains a great deal that is of assistance to the missionary student. The extensive bibliographies are particularly helpful regardless of regional interest.

Two rather comprehensive works, designed to cover a range much broader than that of "unwritten literature," contain summary articles that will be found to be valuable particularly as introductions to the study of regional folklore. The earliest is the Encyclopaedia of Literature

(J. T. Shipley, editor, 1946) in which there are articles on the following areas: "South American Indian", "North American Native", "African," "Polynesian" and "Australian (Aborigine)". In Funk and Wagnalls' Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend (2 vols., M. Leach, editor, 1949) there are articles on the following areas as well as the ones above: "Mexican and Central American Indian Folklore", "African and New World Negro Folklore", "Indonesian (Malaysian) Mythology", "Melanesian Mythology", "Micronesian Mythology", and "Polynesian Mythology".

Space does not permit a listing of even a few of the various excellent volumes, both of analysis and bibliography, prepared for these areas. One specific work might be useful as an example of the analysis of a large segment of the literature of a single tribe. That is Ruth Benedict, Introduction to Zuni Mythology (2 vols., 1935). A good bit can be gleaned from this that will be helpful for method as well.

The most available periodical in the field is the Journal of American Folklore, published quarterly by the American Folklore Society, Philadelphia. Excellent regional journals are available to those with such interests.

NOTES

1. This particular division and definition of the types of prose narrative was introduced to me by W. R. Bascom at Northwestern University. I have never run across it, in exactly this form, in the literature.

2. Stith Thompson, The Folktale, New York, 1946, p. 271.

3. loc. cit., p. 163.

4. For reference to the extensive work available for Latin America, see R. S. Boggs, Bibliography of Latin-American Folklore, New York, 1940.

5. Alfonso Villa Rojas, "Significado y Valor Practico del Folklore," American Indigena 5: 1945, p. 297.

6. Note especially the section on "Studying the Folktale", and the chapter on "Collecting Folktales" in Thompson, op. cit., pp. 367-462.

REVIEWS

Anthropology Today: an Encyclopedic Inventory. Prepared under the Chairmanship of A. L. Kroeber. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 966 pp. $9.00.
An Appraisal of Anthropology Today. Edited by Sol Tax, L. C. Eiseley, Irving Rouse, C. F. Voeglin. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 395 pp. $6.00.

Anthropology Today and An Appraisal of Anthropology Today are the result of an international symposium on anthropology sponsored by the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research Inc. The purpose was to have a symposium "...to which scholars from nearly all the major regions of the world would be invited, in order to assess the accomplishments of anthropological science to date and to solicit answers on what direction future research would be likely to take, so that the Wenner-Gren Foundation might be provided with a concrete basis on which to erect its future policies." (p.v) Dr. A. L. Kroeber agreed to act as chairman and the meetings were held in June, 1952.

Anthropology Today, which is the main volume, consists of fifty inventory papers, each of which was prepared by a specialist in that particular field. These papers are divided into three sections: 1) Problems of Historical Approach; 2) Problems of Process; and 3) Problems of Application. The first two sections are each further divided into three subdivisions: a) Method; b) Results; and c) Theory. An Appraisal of Anthropology Today is an edited account of the discussions which took place concerning the inventory papers.

The first section, as the title suggests, is concerned with the historical approach. The majority of the papers deal with physical anthropology, archaeology, and culture history. Some specific areas evaluated are fossil man, primatology, evolutionary theory, archaeological theory, and the prehistoric archaeology of the world. (Five chapters are devoted to the latter subject). The interest of

the Christian in these papers will depend on his background and general interest in the different fields covered.

The second section consists of papers on process. These subjects cover a very wide field, among which are acculturation, national character, human ecology, social structure, the processing of anthropological materials, and structural linguistics.

The final section includes papers on the application of anthropology in different fields of endeavor. Among these are government, medicine, industry, and language teaching.

It is obvious that in a review of this length, one cannot give much of an idea of the general contents of the papers. Those who would like a detailed review are referred to the American Anthropologist (vol. 56, no. 3), which devotes twenty-six pages to a review of these volumes, in which the papers are treated according to general subject matter. To give an impression of the different fields which are covered, a few of the papers will be briefly considered.

In the first section, "Long Range Dating in Archaeology" by R. F. Heizer is interesting for Christians. The paper deals with the two major classes of time reckoning methods: 1) methods in the physical sciences; and 2) methods in the natural sciences. Under the physical sciences, Heizer discusses the astronomical, geological, radioactive, chemical, and other methods of dating. The radioactive (C^{14}) method is especially useful for ages up to 20,000 to 30,000 years because it is accurate within ranges of calculated error. It was by this method that the antiquity of man in the New World was set at more than ten thousand years.

Heizer also discusses fluorine analysis, which is one of the chemical methods. The primary value of the fluorine content of different bones which come from the same deposit. It was with the help of this type of analysis that the

Piltdown find was shown to be a hoax. The jaw did not contain the same amount of fluorine as did the cranium.

Also of considerable interest is "Dating Fossil Human Remains" by Kenneth Oakley, the British Museum scientist who has done so much with the fluorine method of dating. Both Heizer's and Oakley's papers will be of particular help to those who desire a better understanding of the methods and problems of assigning dates to archaeological and human palaeontological finds.

In the second section, "Field Methods and Techniques in Linguistics" by F. G. Lounsbury may be useful to those working in the field of linguistics. He states that not all of linguistics is so esoteric that it is beyond the reach of any but the lifetime specialists in the field.

> ...speaking now for the linguists among us, we realize the smallness of our contingent and the impossibility of accomplishing, by ourselves, more than the smallest portion of the job which we want to see done before it is too late. Most of us are exceedingly grateful for the current contributions of missionaries to our field. Indeed, if a fair portion of the languages of primitive peoples gets documented before vanishing from the earth, it may be due more to the efforts of today's linguistically trained missionaries than to anthropologists or professional linguists. (p. 401)

After giving a sketch of the development of linguistic methods, Lounsbury discusses field techniques including the use of mechanical means for the collection of data and measuring dialect distance.

Another helpful paper in this section is "Interview Techniques and Field Relationships" by B. D. Paul. Although he is writing with the ethnologist in mind, many of the points which Paul makes can well be observed by the missionary anthropologist in a new area. He suggests that if the society is stratified, "Filtering down from the top presents fewer obstacles than attempting to work upward,

whether the strata are castes, informal classes, or nobility and commoners." (p. 431) The role which a field worker assumes is important, and it is also important that he make that role clear to the people. "If a newcomer fails to take steps to clarify his role, the people will attempt to resolve uncertainly by fitting him into a classification familiar to them." (p. 483)

The subject of participation in the native culture is well handled. Paul suggests avenues for participation, as well as the limits to, and hazards of doing so in a strange culture. He suggests for instance, that sometimes, in the event that the ethnographer is not readily accepted as a participant by the people, it is best to go to another place not too far away and there recuperate and study lines for further inquiry.

> Any tension that may have been built up in the community will subside during the interval of his absence or find outlet in other directions. He may be warmly hailed when he returns and be regarded as a real friend who shows his loyalty by coming back. (p. 441)

In the last section there are, among other papers, four which deal with the application of anthropology in government. These discuss some of the mistakes which have been made in the governing of peoples, and also some of the ways that the application of anthropological principles has averted mistakes which may have been costly. Since many missions are in a policy-making position, missionaries should be acquainted with the value of applying anthropological concepts in dealing with non-western peoples.

An Appraisal of Anthropology Today is a very useful and important companion volume to Anthropology Today. Much of the interchange of opinion concerning the inventory papers is both stimulating and informative, presenting the personal viewpoints of outstanding men in the field. Anthropology Today is also especially valuable because of the extensive bibliography which is included with most of the individual papers. These two volumes should be in the

possession of every Christian student of anthropology, for they represent an assessment of the accomplishments of anthropological science to date and a statement of problems for the future.

Claude E. Stipe

Santa Monica, Calif.

* * *

LETTERS AND BRIEF COMMUNICATIONS

A "Transformed" Relativism

To the Editor:

This is not written with the idea of publication, but you may feel free to quote from it if you like. I'm dashing it off too hastily to let it be considered a ccarefully worked out comment.

The Sept-Oct issue of P. A. arrived a few days ago, and I want to express my thanks and congratulations for your article, preliminary as you may consider it. You obviously do not expect to have it received as the last word on the subject, but I am very happy to get the impression that, for my money, it is well past the first word.

We should, I believe, avoid giving the impression that the problem exists simply on a horizontal line or plane. On such a line, cultural relativism of an extreme sort is at one end, ethnocentrism (particularly, perhaps, in the extreme form manifested by some Christians who are also

Americans) is at the other end, and the "proper Christian position" is somewhere in between. Your statement does not, I am happy to see, consistently and consciously express the problem in this way, but there are touches of it. What you call "a moderate position of relativism" is certainly what we are after, but it is more than a middle-of-the-road position between ethnocentrism and consistent relativism. You imply as much when you speak of "kinds" of ethnocentrism (as distinguished from amounts of it), and "kinds" of cultural traits and their relation to Christianity. You are very much on the right track in that respect, I am sure.

To start a few steps farther back in the problem, we should not be satisfied that Christianity supposedly allows or even demands some kind of "modified" relativism. Suppose we say, rather, that Christianity demands a "transformed" relativism. From the point of view of a consistent Scriptural attitude toward all human culture, both the relativism of those who do not happen to be Christians and the ethnocentrism of many who do happen to be Christians are equally non-Christian, anti-Christian, and invalid. Unfortunately, the fact that some regenerate people are Masons does not sanctify Masonry--and the fact that many regenerate people are cursed with an unhealthy ethnocentrism does not make that ethnocentrism Christian. The true Christian position is on an entirely different level....

I have sometimes found it useful, particularly in personal evangelism, to use this kind of distinction. First, as you (whether an aboriginal tribesman, a non-Christian American, or even a Christian who happens to have points of disagreement with me) and I stand before man, neither of us can claim any superiority over the other. I cannot claim before man that my theology is better than your paganism, thay my monogamy is better than your polygamy, or even that my dignified prayer is better than your human sacrifice. AS WE STAND BEFORE MAN, I must be a thoroughgoing relativist. The only reservation is this: I, for one, am convinced that we stand before more than mere man. So, second, as you and I stand before God, neither of us can judge the other. I cannot go into your tribe and tell you that it is

wrong to cut yourself as penance, and also that I want to tell you something about God. I can only go to you and tell you that I want to tell you what I whole-heartedly believe God has said, and THIS message includes the implication that cutting yourself as penance is wrong. But it is not ME that judges. I can try to tell you that we both stand before God, but I cannot (in Samarin's words) "play God" except in my own private opinions. But third, as you and I stand before God, God may have a different opinion of the matter. So you don't believe that God does judge, or that he has an opinion, or that his opinion is that you are wrong? I can only talk to you, man to man, to try to get you to see the consistency and the truth and the happiness of my position--and, having the internal witness of the Spirit myself, I can privately be convinced that you will see that light only as the Spirit works in your heart.

Accordingly, until you are regenerate yourself, the ONLY effort I can make to stamp out human sacrifice or any other "evil" is by an appeal to whatever humaneness you may retain of God's image, by civil law (encouraging a government), or by other procedures that make me a persuader or a majority or even a benevolent dictator--but not a divine judge.

To put it a little differently, as Christian missionaries we must work on the culture through the regenerate heart. We must not work, or attempt to work, on unregenerate hearts and on the culture independently. Apart from regeneration, relativism deserves to be modified only by the kind of humane principles that Common Grace maintains among so many humans. With regeneration, our cultural attitudes are not ethnocentric but theocentric. Christianity is a religion of absolutes. But the absolutes, the ultimates, are not characteristics of one culture or another, nor characteristics of one man or another. They are not horizontal, not a modified ethnocentrism which upholds traits of a "Christian culture" as one of many. They are vertical, God-centered, absolutes. We do not <u>shift</u> a culture to make it more like a Christian culture. We <u>lift</u> or transform it to be God-centered.

From a practical point of view, your distinction of three kinds of cultural traits is excellent--I have frequently made the same point myself (and so, I presume, that proves it is excellent?). Particularly the last two--those definitely out of harmony with Scripture and those which are neutral (adiaphora)--are well stated. The first is hard to state properly. The other day, in attempting to express myself to people who do not know much English, and using English, I said "Missionaries came here to tell you people why you should be patient and forgiving, but you have taught me, a Christian and missionary, how to be patient and forgiving." That is hardly accurate, of course, but the fact remains that I and other missionaries have learned something about patience and forgiveness from the Kpelle and Loma people. Just what was it? In what sense can those cultural traits be "retained and integrated with Christianity?" Again, they must be transformed so that patience is much more than lackadaisical sitting around, and forgiveness is much more than "let's forget it--live and let live." In those respects, there is much of the FORM of godliness here--more than many of us Christian Americans usually manifest superficially. But the form must have the POWER, and when that happens the form is transformed from an empty shell to a living force....

Both my wife and I devour every issue of P. A. avidly, and discuss many of the problems at length. May God continue to guide your efforts...

Wm. E. Welmers
Lutheran Mission
Monrovia, Liberia

NOTES AND NEWS

Custance is Candidate for Anthropology Degree

Mr. Arthur C. Custance of Willowdale, Ontario has been pursuing graduate study at the University of Toronto and is now a candidate for a Ph.D. in the field of anthropology. Most of his previous experience has been in the field of mechanical engineering. He holds an M.A. in Oriental languages and is a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

At the present time Mr. Custance keeps busy as a special lecturer in universities for the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, chiefly in Canada but also in some U. S. colleges. His lectures have to do with various subjects regarding the implications of modern research and thought with respect to Christian faith.

Buswell Presents Paper at AAA Meeting

James O. Buswell, III, anthropology instructor at Wheaton, attended the American Anthropological Association's annual meeting, which was held in Detroit during the latter part of December, 1954. The subject of the paper he presented before one of the sessions was "Some Observations on Language and Culture." The material was drawn from his master's thesis, "An Introduction to Ethnolinguistics."

Summer Institute of Linguistics: Announcement

The Summer Institute of Linguistics takes pleasure in announcing the dates of the 1955 sessions. The courses will be held at the University of Oklahoma from June 13 to August 26 and at the University of North Dakota from June 20 to September 2.

Unwritten languages should be written. Their speakers need the vehicle, linguists need the data, missionaries need the results. Accordingly, Camp Wycliffe, as the Institute is more popularly called, is designed to prepare

missionaries in the fundamental principles of language reduction and Bible translation. This school has operated in the United States since 1934 and now has graduates in more than 25 countries on five continents, and cut under the auspices of more than 35 denominational and interdenominational mission boards. The Institute holds sessions on the campuses of the Universities of Oklahoma and North Dakota, and is fully accredited by these universities for graduate and undergraduate work. Each year from 250 to more than 300 students are in attendance, coming from all over the United States and Canada, and sometimes from foreign countries. The Institute also holds a branch summer session at the Briarcrest Bible Institute, Caronport, Saskatchewan. Affiliated schools are carried on in Melbourne, Australia and London, England.

The purpose of the school is to equip missionaries and missionary candidates with the methods and techniques which are necessary for pioneer linguistic work as well as to learn more rapidly and accurately the aboriginal languages in which some preliminary language work may have been begun.

The Summer Institute of Linguistics does not teach specific languages as such, but rather the underlying principles of language analysis--general principles basic to all languages. The Institute teaches the skills necessary for learning, writing, and describing languages: recording and reproduction of non-English speech sounds, alphabet formation, dictionary editing, phonological and grammatical description, primer preparation, and translation. The principles are illustrated by material from all parts of the world so that the qualified graduate is prepared to face any language he may meet, whether or not there is any literature written in or about it.

The Summer Institute of Linguistics is open to missionaries from all Protestant denominational and interdenominational boards, to missionary candidates already accepted by such boards, and to students in the process of preparation for pioneer missionary work who have completed a major portion of their training. Applicants should have

systematic training in the Bible and some language study, preferably Greek. Applicants must be evangelical in faith.

Requests for catalogs and application blanks and all correspondence should be addressed to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Box 870, Glendale 5, California, U. S. A.

--Dale Kietzman

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